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Home College Series.

Number ✻ *Forty-Six.*

UNITED STATES.

BY REV. J. I. BOSWELL.

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THE "HOME COLLEGE SERIES" will contain one hundred short papers on a wide range of subjects—biographical, historical, scientific, literary, domestic, political, and religious. Indeed, the religious tone will characterize all of them. They are written for every body—for all whose leisure is limited, but who desire to use the minutes for the enrichment of life.

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J. H. VINCENT.

NEW YORK, *Jan.*, 1883.

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UNITED STATES.

The ocean voyage is ended. A charming view greets the eye of the European tourist as the steamer glides into the spacious harbor of New York city. He has reached a land in which there are no splendid cathedrals like those of Milan and Cologne, no massive ruins like those in Rome, and but few masterpieces of sculpture and painting like those which adorn the galleries of Paris and Florence. But he will gaze upon natural scenery which is unsurpassed, and witness the efforts of a mighty people to work out a mighty destiny.

Cities.—New York was settled by a Dutch colony in 1614. Its growth has been rapid, and it now ranks next to London and Paris among the cities of the civilized world. Its commerce is great and growing. Broadway is lined with large business houses and hotels. Trinity Church faces Wall Street, which is a money-center, and the fashionable Fifth Avenue leads to Central Park, which is the pride of the city. Boston is the chief city of New England, and is often called, because of its culture, the "Athens of America." Bunker Hill, on which there is a granite monument, and Faneuil Hall are places of historic interest. Harvard University and the noble Public Library are worthy of a visit, as well as Boston Common.

Fast trains run in two hours from New York to Philadelphia, ninety miles away. This city manufactures every thing from a pin to a locomotive engine, and it is a city of homes. On Chestnut Street stands the old State House, a plain brick structure. On the ground floor are two rooms filled with

portraits and historical relics, and in one of these rooms was signed the Declaration of Independence. The old bell, which rung out when this great State paper was signed, is carefully preserved. Girard College and Fairmount Park, where, in 1876, the Centennial Exhibition was held, are among the places of interest.

Baltimore is the "Monumental City." The Washington Monument is the pride of the city, and the "Battle Monument" is in memory of those who fell in the defense of the city against the British in 1814.

Washington is the capital of the Republic. Its public buildings are of vast size, and a visit to them will give one some idea of the public business of the country. The Patent Office, with its great collection of models, displays the inventive genius of Americans. The Capitol is the most imposing state-building in the world. It is 751 feet in length, covers three and a half acres of ground, and cost more than $13,000,000. It contains two large rooms where the branches of Congress meet, a rotunda, in which are historical paintings, a large library, and other rooms rich with various colored marbles and statuary.

Other cities are: Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and San Francisco; and a glance at the map will show their location. Their growth has been rapid. Never in history have any cities grown with the rapidity of those in America, and he who would study the United States must begin with the study of its great cities.

History.—The history of the United States may be divided into *three* periods: I. Colonial, (1619–1761;) II. Revolutionary, (1761–1789;) and III. National, (1789 to the present time.)

I. *Colonial*, (1619–1761.)—The discovery of America, in 1492, is one of the greatest events in the history of the world.

Columbus was followed by many daring sailors from different parts of Europe, among whom were Americus Vespucius, who discovered South America; Cabot, who sailed along the coasts from Labrador to the Carolinas; De Soto, who discovered the Mississippi; and Hudson, who sailed up the river which bears his name. Settlements were made by the English, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Swedes, on various parts of the coast; but some of these were broken up or divided. In Virginia the English settlers met at Jamestown, in 1619, to make laws and form an assembly. Thus the settlement became a colony. Other colonies rapidly followed.

The first settlers were adventurers, who came to make money rapidly. Many of them were lazy and profligate; and disease, cold, hunger, and the attacks of the Indians soon thinned their numbers. Then came a better class of persons.

In 1682 William Penn, the Quaker, sailed up the Delaware, established a colony, made a famous treaty with the Indians, and founded the city of Philadelphia. In 1620, after a voyage of sixty-three days, the ship *Mayflower* reached Plymouth, and a company of Puritans landed. The Puritans were Englishmen who were opposed to the formal ceremonies of the Church of England. They were persecuted and fled, first to Holland and thence to America, where they hoped to have freedom to worship God. In the same year that they landed a Dutch trading-vessel sailed up the James River, in Virginia, and sold a cargo of negro slaves. Thus in these two ships were carried the seeds of two kinds of civilization, between which there arose, in after years, an "irrepressible conflict."

The colonists had a struggle for existence. After they had subdued the wilderness discussions arose among them. In Maryland, Protestants persecuted Roman Catholics; in New England, Puritans persecuted Baptists and Quakers. Quarrels arose between the French and English colonies, each claiming certain lands. The English settlers held the coast, and

the French had a chain of military posts from Lake Erie to New Orleans. The struggle for national supremacy came, and for a time it was doubtful whether the land would be under French or English dominion. English valor triumphed, and Wolfe won a splendid victory on the heights of Quebec.

II. *Revolutionary Period*, (1761–1789.)—In 1761 George III. ascended the throne of England, and began his eventful reign of sixty years. To replenish his treasury he resorted to an odious system of taxation. The Stamp Act was passed, and the clamor which arose caused it to be repealed. Then a tax was laid upon tea. The tax was small, but the people refused to pay it. They held that the colonies should not be taxed without their consent. The Americans were not represented in the English Parliament, and they held, with great force of reasoning, that taxation without representation was tyranny. In this view they were upheld by two of England's greatest orators—Chatham and Burke. The agitation increased, and in the year 1774 delegates from the colonies met in Philadelphia to consider the situation. They formed what is known as the First Continental Congress, and among it were men whose names are now "household words.". War was declared, and the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. The Americans now despaired of justice being done to them as British subjects, and began to desire independence. In June, 1776, Lee arose in Congress, which met in Philadelphia, and declared that the United Colonies were, and ought to be, free and independent States. A month later a paper, giving reasons why the colonies should be independent, was signed by all the members. This paper is the Declaration of Independence. It was drawn up by a committee of five, consisting of Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston, and its adoption marks the birth of the American nation.

The war continued. The army of the colonists suffered

much at times from lack of supplies, and the treachery of Arnold barely failed of success. But the wisdom of Washington, who led the army, and the courage of the soldiers, and the firmness of the people were not in vain; and the victory over Cornwallis ended the war. The colonies became free, and were declared to be so by the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The country at that time extended from Florida to the St. Lawrence River, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi.

This period was fertile in great men, and first among these was George Washington. He was born in Virginia in 1732, and was chosen Commander-in-chief of the American forces in 1775. He was wise, brave, and good. In his army orders he rebuked profanity, and urged the proper observance of the Sabbath. He held power not for his own sake, but for that of his country, and he died in 1799 lamented, not alone by the American nation, but by the whole civilized world. His remains rest in the vault at Mount Vernon—his former home.

Thomas Jefferson wrote nearly all of that great State paper, the Declaration of Independence. He was for eight years President of the Republic, and was opposed to the pomp and show seen in European courts. He was opposed to Washington in this, that he favored giving a larger share of power directly into the hands of the people.

Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston in 1706. He became a printer, an editor, a man of science, a diplomatist, and, best of all, a philanthropist. His career was remarkable, and worthy of study and imitation. He died in 1790 at the ripe age of eighty-five years. He saw the coming strife between the colonies and England, and proposed a plan to avoid it. His discoveries in electricity made him famous, and his eulogy is found in those oft-quoted words, "He snatched the lightning from the sky and the scepter from the tyrants."

Samuel Adams was a scholar and an orator. In an oration delivered in August, 1776, he spoke of England as "a nation of shop-keepers"—a phrase which Napoleon used twenty years afterward, and is supposed to be original with him.

Patrick Henry was the orator of the Revolution, and his style of speaking was fiery and impetuous. The speech of 1765, said Jefferson, "gave the earliest impulse to the ball of revolution." In it occurs the passage, "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third"—("Treason!" "Treason!" resounded from all parts of the assembly)—"may profit by their example. If that be treason, make the most of it!" In 1775 he gave voice to the feeling of the liberty-loving people of the colonies: "If we wish to be free we must fight. An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left to us."

John Adams was among the most eminent of the statesmen of this period. He was a thorough scholar, and several volumes of his writings remain. At the early age of nineteen, in the year 1755, he predicted the coming nation, and said, alluding to the infant colonies: "The only way to keep us from setting up for ourselves is to disunite us."

During the seven years of war the colonies were kept together by the Articles of Confederation. These were not satisfactory, as they permitted a conflict of powers between the colonies. In 1787 a convention was held in Philadelphia. There were stormy debates, but, guided by the wisdom of the venerable Franklin, a Constitution was framed and sent to the States for adoption. It was agreed to, and on the 4th of March, 1789, became the great law of the Republic. Then was the Confederacy of States fused into a single nation, and a new career of prosperity began.

III. *National Period,* (1789 to the present time.)—Washington was chosen President, and John Adams Vice-President. Washington served two terms of four years each, and then

declined a re-election for a third term. In 1796 he issued his Farewell Address, which is a noble document and weighty with words of wisdom. In 1790 the city of Washington was laid out, and ten years later it was declared to be the national capital. During the century the country has grown with great rapidity. A tide of emigration at once crossed the Alleghanies, and in 1802 Ohio was admitted into the Union. In 1803 Louisiana was purchased from France, in 1806 Florida from Spain, and in 1867 Alaska from Russia. The invention of steam-boats and railroads stimulated emigration, and caused the fertile valley of the Mississippi to be settled. In 1849 gold was discovered on the Pacific coast, and the State of California was formed. The whole land was filled with the triumphs of the arts of peace.

Three wars mark the century. The first was against Great Britain, which claimed the right to search American ships. It continued two years, and ended in 1814. The second was against Mexico. It grew out of the annexation of Texas, and ended in 1848; and New Mexico and California were the fruits of the victories of Scott and Taylor. The third was a war which threatened the life of the nation. For years feeling had arisen between the free and slave States whenever a new State was to be admitted. The South found slave labor to be profitable, and desired to extend it; the North bitterly opposed such extension. In 1850 California desired to be admitted into the Union as a free-labor State. Violent discussion took place, and the Compromise of Henry Clay was agreed to. California might come in as a free State, but if slaves should escape from the South into the free States, they should be given up to their owners. This last measure, known as the Fugitive Slave Law, was violently opposed in the New England States. In 1856 there was great strife as to whether Kansas should be a free or slave State, but it ended in 1861, and Kansas became a free State of the Republic. So the strife went on, intensified by the

raid of John Brown, until, in 1860, Abraham Lincoln, who was opposed to the further extension of slavery, was elected. The Southern States seceded, and formed a Confederacy. Fort Sumter was attacked in the spring of 1861, and the war began. It continued four years, and for a time results seemed doubtful. The Southern ports were blockaded, but the North made but little headway. Then the Mississippi River was opened, then followed the march of Sherman and his army through Georgia to the sea, and finally the capture of Richmond by Grant and the surrender of the army of Lee. The war ended, but the joy of the nation was clouded by the assassination of Lincoln, April 15, 1865.

Since then the country has enjoyed a period of peace, under the administrations of Presidents Grant and Hayes. The death of President Garfield by the hands of an assassin, in 1881, moved the country deeply, but did not disturb its prosperity. The union of States seems to be firm, and the prayer of every patriot heart is, "God save the Republic!"

Several events may be noticed. In 1795 the Whisky Insurrection occurred. It was caused by a refusal of the whisky-makers to pay the tax, and was soon suppressed. In 1804 the duel took place between Hamilton and Burr. Hamilton was killed, and Burr gathered a band of troops to seize Texas. It was thought that he really intended to divide the Union, but his suspected treachery could not be proved. In 1824 the distinguished Lafayette, who had aided so nobly in the war for independence, visited America, and was greeted with great enthusiasm. In 1825, the Erie Canal, over 360 miles in length, was finished, and Lake Erie was connected with the Hudson River. In 1828 a Protective Tariff was adopted to encourage manufactures, but the tariff has been, and is, a cause of trouble. In 1832 it led South Carolina to the verge of secession, which was avoided only by the firmness of President Jackson and the "Compromise" measure of Henry Clay. Jackson declared that

in his administration he acted upon the principle—ask nothing but what is right, and submit to nothing that is wrong. In 1826, on the 4th of July, just fifty years after the Declaration of Independence, died Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. They were two of the five which had drawn up that document, and each had been Vice-President and then President of the United States.

The Land.—The American Republic comprises the best portion of the continent of North America. It is in the temperate zone, and is bounded east and west by great oceans, north by the chain of lakes and the river St. Lawrence, and south by the Gulf of Mexico. It is about 2,800 miles from east to west, and on an average 1,200 miles from north to south. Two mountain ranges traverse the country, and in Colorado the loftiest peaks rise to a height of 14,000 feet. Rivers abound, and some of them are of great length. There are rich mines of coal and iron in the East, copper in the North, and gold and silver in the West. The valley of the Mississippi is of vast extent, and its fertility is only surpassed by the valley of the Nile. A good portion is either unsettled or thinly settled, though there is a present population of more than 50,000,000. The natural scenery is very fine, and the Hudson River and Lake George will compare favorably with the river Rhine and Lake Geneva. Among the great natural curiosities are Niagara Falls, the Mammoth Cave, and the Yellowstone and Yosemite Parks.

To govern a country of such vast extent would not have been easy in ancient times; but modern inventions have practically brought all parts near together. In 1807 Robert Fulton took a boat "against wind and tide from New York to Albany in 36 hours;" and in 1844 Professor Morse sent his first telegraphic message. Railroads connect all the great cities, and the road from Omaha to San Francisco is among the great engineering works of the century. A common

language, the steam-engine, the telegraphic wire, and the cheap postal system, are among the things which make it possible for the United States to be one nation.

The People.—The American is mainly an Englishman, modified by climate and by mixture with other races. He is of English descent, he speaks the language of Chatham and Burke, he reads the English version of the Bible, and is familiar with Shakespeare and Milton. His mind is nourished with the literature of England, and his views on great subjects are mainly formed by contact with English writers. Blackstone teaches him law; Adam Smith, the principles of political economy; and Barrow, Burnet, and Matthew Henry, religious truth.

Climate and country have made the American as well as race. He is thin in face and voice, restless, and ready to move west and "locate" where he can improve his condition. He is fond of travel and adventure, and has built steam-boats, hotels, and luxurious cars, which are among the wonderful things of the age. Like all civilized people, he is eager to make money and to read the newspaper. His inventive genius is great, and is sharpened by the struggle for wealth. The sewing-machine, the cabinet organ, the reaping-machine, are but a few of the many inventions with which he has enriched the nation. His patriotism is strong, and he is ever ready to speak of his "great and glorious country" with pardonable pride. He is fond of stirring oratory, and insists that every public man should make a speech. Conventions are held of all kinds, and a great speaker soon becomes conspicuous. The two great themes are politics and religion. The most eminent secular orators are Clay, Everett, and Webster, whose masterly reply to Hayne places him in the first rank. Among pulpit orators Channing is the best known abroad. Such is the American type, but it is changing, owing to constant immigration. In some

of the western cities the German influence is making itself strongly felt.

Government.—The settlements in America gradually became colonies, and these were thirteen in number when the war of the Revolution began. It was then found that the colonies must unite as one State in the war with Great Britain. In 1777 Franklin and others wrote laws to bind the colonies to concert of action. These were agreed to, and formed the Articles of Confederation. After peace was restored it was found that these were not sufficiently comprehensive and binding. State-rights and State jealousies made constant trouble until, in a spirit of compromise, the States gave up certain privileges to a general government formed according to a National Constitution. This Constitution provides for three branches of government—the Legislative, Judicial, and Executive. Congress, which is composed of the Senate and House of Representatives, makes the laws, and has power among other things to levy and collect taxes, to regulate commerce, to coin money, declare war, and establish post-offices. The Executive power is vested in a President, who holds office for a term of four years, and who is chosen by electors elected by the people of the States. He is aided in his work by a Cabinet composed of the chiefs of the departments. The Judicial power is vested in a Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as Congress ordains.

The growth of the Republic has created a large number of offices of wealth or honor. This fact, with the frequency of elections, causes great political excitement. Money is freely spent to procure the election of a candidate. Sometimes the political parties are animated by great principles, but in local elections it is often a selfish struggle between those who are in office and those who wish to take their places. The leaders of political parties are often animated

by the sentiment, "To the victors belong the spoils." Efforts are now being made to check the evils of party patronage and to promote a reform in the civil service.

The good and evil results of popular suffrage are clearly to be seen. Foreigners who are "free white persons," or of "African nativity," may become citizens, but this privilege is denied to any person from China. The interest felt at every oft-recurring election is often intense. Party spirit runs high, but the party vote is not always free for the best candidates, but for those who have been nominated by certain party leaders and their friends at "primary meetings."

As a rule the cities are badly governed, but a better state of things is hoped for. Constant watchfulness is required to prevent fraud and to enforce the laws against popular vices.

Literature.—The colonists depended on England for their literature. They wrote treatises and pamphlets; but these are of value only as curiosities. The first writer known to Europe was Jonathan Edwards, (1703–1757,) and his work on "The Freedom of the Will" is his monument. The theology of Edwards left a deep impress upon the age, and still survives. Benjamin Franklin edited, for twenty-five years, "Poor Richard's Almanac," in which he taught the people the way "to be healthy, wealthy, and wise." His sayings abound in shrewd sense and humor, and many have become current in the languages. The Revolutionary period was one of controversy. Political writers, as Jay, Madison, and Hamilton, wrote essays in the "Federalist," which had great weight in settling the form of government. Some of their views were strongly opposed by Thomas Jefferson. Since that period a host of writers has appeared in every department of literature. Cooper ranks first among novelists in America, and some of his thirty-four novels have been

translated into the languages of Europe. He is not equal, however, to Hawthorne, whose "Scarlet Letter" and "Marble Faun" have won the highest praise of critics. "Uncle Tom's Cabin," by Mrs. Stowe, had an immense circulation abroad and at home.

Washington Irving won his fame by his "Sketch-Book." He is a genial essayist of the Addison school, and his style is pure and graceful. Bryant, Whittier, and Lowell are among the poets of America, but the highest place must be given to Henry W. Longfellow, who is as popular in England as in America. "Evangeline" is said to be his best poem; but he will live longest in his minor pieces, such as the "Psalm of Life" and the "Village Blacksmith."

Historians are numerous. Bancroft's "History of the United States" has been generally accepted as the standard history. Prescott and Motley have written histories of foreign lands which are as eagerly read abroad as at home; and Ticknor has written a work on Spanish literature which is the best on the subject.

Other writers, well known abroad, are Channing and Robinson, whose "Biblical Researches" gave an impulse to "Palestine Explorations;" and Emerson, whose "Essays" have had a marked influence; and Edgar A. Poe, whose "Raven" gives him a peculiar place. Others have a fleeting fame, and some who are humorous are popular abroad. But as yet there is little that is enduring. Writers of ability give their strength to magazines and newspapers, and their work is marked by haste. American literature is still in the bud—the flower and fruit are yet to come.

Religion.—There is no State Church in America, and Congress has no power to establish any. The Christian religion prevails, and Churches of all denominations abound. The Methodist Churches are the most numerous, and recognize John Wesley as their spiritual founder. The Baptists

are strong, especially in the Southern States. The Protestant Episcopal Church corresponds to the Established Church of England in doctrines and liturgy, and the Congregational Churches were founded by the Puritans of New England. The Presbyterian Churches are numerous, and the Reformed Churches are the outgrowth of the Dutch settlements in New York and New Jersey. Protestantism is largely in the ascendant. The Roman Catholic Church is strong in certain cities, and has a political influence out of proportion to its numbers. Its growth is mainly due to immigration from Ireland and Germany, and it has costly public buildings in the centers of population. It is the steady and persistent foe of the public-school system, and this fact has awakened much feeling.

Among the minor sects is Mormonism, whose home is in Utah, and whose peculiar feature—polygamy—has caused it to be strongly opposed.

Within recent years the European element has modified American society. Sunday in the cities is becoming a holiday, and travel on that day is increasing. Strong drinks are freely used, though the party which favors abstinence has been of late increasing. In the legislation of some of the Western States increased facilities are given for divorces. It is to be feared that non-attendance at Church services is increasing. These evils are seen, and strong efforts are put forth to check them.

Complaint has been made that the Christian religion is not recognized in the Constitution of the United States. In 1789 Washington, in reply to a communication on this subject, declared "that the path of true piety is so plain as to require but little political direction." Certain it is, that the government of the country was molded by Christian influences. The key-note of Webster's masterly speech in the Girard Will case is—"Christianity is a part of the law of the land."

Social Life.—The social life of the Republic is constantly changing. The early settlers were from various lands of Europe; but the English settlers predominated. Slavery wrought a great change, and the South remained stationary while the North rapidly grew in commerce and manufactures. A feeling of hostility grew up, and efforts were made to extend and to limit the progress of slavery. War followed, and settled the vexed question fully and forever. On the 1st of January, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln set more than 3,000,000 of bondsmen free. In 1864 200,000 of these freedmen were soldiers in the National army, and in 1870 it was declared that the rights of citizens shall not be denied or abridged "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Since the civil war there has been made great progress in all the arts of life. Travel to foreign lands has increased. The architecture of public and private buildings is more varied than formerly. Public parks have been laid out, and museums and galleries of art are in process of formation. Increased attention is given to the higher class of music, and artistic taste is shown in dress and furniture. Colleges were early established, but only of late have they been liberally endowed.

Whether public morality has grown apace with public refinement, is a serious question. The struggle between capital and labor is increasing. But the American patriot will recall the triumphs of the past century, and will not despair of the Republic.

NOTES.

There are many histories of the United States. Bancroft's history, in nine volumes, is a standard work. Ridpath's history is a good one, in a single volume. There are also some excellent smaller volumes. Lossing's "Field-Book of the Revolution," and Washington Irving's "Life of Washington," treat of an important period.

In one of the rooms of Independence Hall is the "Old Bell" which rang out on the 4th of July, 1776, and proclaimed the birth of the nation. On its iron rim are inscribed the words of Scripture, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof. Lev. xxv, 10."

The first Continental Congress was held in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia. This hall is an interesting relic. In it met such men as John and Samuel Adams, Washington, Patrick Henry, and Lee; and here a Protestant Episcopal clergyman made an extemporaneous prayer which made tears run down the faces of all men—even of the Quakers.

Little things betray character. The following sentences will show something of the character of those who helped to shape the destiny of the United States:

"A Bible and a newspaper in every house—a good school in every district."—Franklin.

"The poor are my best patients, for God is their paymaster."—Dr. Benjamin Rush.

"I have now disposed of all my property to my family. There is one thing more I wish that I could give them, and that is the Christian religion. If they had this, and I had not given them one shilling, they would be rich; and if they had it not, and I had given them all the world, they would be poor." (Extract from the Will of Patrick Henry.)

UNITED STATES.

[THOUGHT-OUTLINE TO HELP THE MEMORY.]

1. Approach? Its great cities?
2. Periods in its history? Discovery? Settlement? Puritans? Perils?
3. Revolution? Cause? Length? Principal actors?
4. Constitutional history? Other wars? Ending in 1814—1848—1865? Special events?
5. Physical Features? Rivers—Mountains—Lakes? Communication?
6. Popular characteristics? National Government? Legislative? Executive?
7. Authors? Churches? Sects? Dangers? Serious questions?

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